

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are currently pending in the application; with claims 1 and 9 being independent. Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to address alleged improper multiple dependent claims.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment and earnestly seek timely allowance of the pending claims.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 13 and 14 under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form for a multiple dependent claim because they do not refer to other claims in the alternative only. While Applicants do not necessarily acquiesce to the Examiner's objection, Applicants have amended claims 13 and 14 to overcome the objection in order to materially advance the prosecution of this case. This amendment does not vary the scope of any claim, merely avoiding the Examiner's concern as to the propriety of the formal identification of multiple parent claims to claims 13 and 14.

Double-Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-23 are rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-8 of US Patent No. 6,720,914.

Without addressing the merits of the assertions of obviousness set forth on pages 2-3 of the Office Action, Applicants have filed a Terminal Disclaimer enclosed herewith, disclaiming any patent term for the present application that would extend beyond the patent issuing from US

Patent No. 6,720,914.

Accordingly, the obviousness-type double patenting rejection has been rendered moot.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection based on the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application appears to be in condition for allowance and the Examiner is, therefore, requested to reexamine the application and pass the claims to issue.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at telephone number (703) 205-8000, which is located in the Washington, DC area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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Attachment: Terminal Disclaimer